

## Well Fuck Me

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# Well Fuck Me

by [Soulless\\_Artist](#)

## Summary

He hates criminals. She's just trying to make life work. He becomes a problem in the best way possible.

## Notes

Tags will be added as the story progresses. Tags existing refer directly to existing chapters or what I'm certain is going to happen

## Chapter 1: Stay Down

The docks are dark beyond the high-beams targeting the cargo. The operators have to see, you suppose, but damn those things are just beacons for trouble. You wrap your arms tighter around your torso, trying to ignore the biting cold seeping into your dense coat, nipping at your fingers. Really, you just wish they would hurry the hell up. The sooner the ship departs, the sooner you can get back to your tiny, warm apartment far from here. A tiny apartment, you remind yourself, you won't be able to afford without the pay from this gig.

The boss said there could be trouble tonight, so tonight is where you are and where you will stay for another teeth-chatteringly long four goddamn hours. There are a few others, of course. It'd be stupid to have one person posted when there are several directions to constantly monitor, not counting multiple angles of the cargo itself. You don't actually know how many more they hired tonight, but you aren't paid to ask. All you have to know is how to listen for a dispatcher to ask for reports on time and, if something happens, give relevant information or wait for orders.

It's when your toes start going numb that you let out a grunt and get up, pacing the short wall and attempting to get blood flowing again. You're turning on your heel when you hear the roar of an engine rapidly approaching. You whip around, spotting the headlight and hitting your communicator. The dispatcher is no doubt receiving all reports about this, so once you give yours you drop to a crouch and wait, watching silently. The bike goes spinning out on its side and hits someone charging the attacker head on. They are dead.

The docks are in an uproar, those in charge of the cargo itself shouting and rushing about behind you. You have to focus on the fight, moving to an easier vantage point. You watch the attacker, a hulking figure in metal armor it seems, take on three others. You watch one get flung into the side of a carrier with enough force you hear the impact over the commotion. The two remaining dodge mid-range attacks you can't make out yet, before trying to throw knives or charge inside the person's hit range. Unfortunately, the knives glance harmlessly off the armor and the other gets wrapped in a chain. The attacker throws the guy at the knife-thrower like a sack of potatoes, colliding hard.

Gunshots indicate sharpshooters making their attempts. Most are as effective as the knives, but one seems to catch him in the thigh. This sort of onslaught is intense, and he's barely taken a hit. Finally, fucking finally, the dispatcher orders me to go in, warning of two others just as trained as you. The problem with this strategy is yeah, you are aware of each other and can fight around it, but you are not a unit. You don't fight like it. And this attacker has obviously caught on to that, or maybe they were already aware of it? Regardless, it's a blaring weakness that's blatantly exploited.

You stop, concealed in shadow, and watch as the other two pounce from above. The attacker, clearly a huge man from this distance, immediately kicks one of them in the chest. That one goes flying, while the other misses their attack. You jump in as the attacker is advancing on the second guy, drawing a long knife silently. Just as you're about to execute a maneuver for pinning larger opponents, he whips around and smashes into you with the back of his hand.

Your arms come up just fast enough to block most of the attack. Still, you're easily knocked a few feet back from it. The second guy is charging again, a gun already cocked. As he gets in close, he shoots towards the attacker's chest. It doesn't seem to do anything, though the man lacks clear exterior armour there. That's when you watch something at the end of that chain smack square into the temple of the man with the gun.

You don't look after that. Instead, you pull a second, smaller knife from your boot. You're about to throw when the first guy smacks the back of the attacker's knee with a long, metal bat. His knee buckles and you think you hear a grunt. The guy pivots, bringing the bat around and up towards the underside of that shining, sharp helmet. The attacker jerks back, bending oddly. His retaliation is brutal. The knee doesn't seem to be sitting right, but he forces it under him and charges the guy, shoulder smacking into his chest. The guy is flung back into a shipping container, obviously barely conscious, but before he can run, the attacker is on him. You hear more than see blow after blow as the attacker whales on the guy. You bite your tongue to keep your dinner down. Assassins don't get sick on lethal jobs.

You draw back into the shadows, putting away the large knife and instead pulling a handgun, prepping it silently. By the time you're prepared, the attacker has backed away from the bat guy—who you immediately avert your eyes from when you realise you aren't sure he has a face anymore. The attacker starts stalking for the cargo ship again, and you realise no more guys have come out to attack. You must be the last one, which is both unfortunate and incredibly lucrative. More incentive to bring this bastard down.

A deep, icy breath cools your nerves as you take aim. The knife finds its target easily in the back of his arm and you're running in, drawing your long knife again. You're slashing up, hard and fast, when he's turning and blocking with a forearm. The thick metal easily deflects. You follow with a kick to the back of his thigh, a pour shot meant for his knee. You're about to jump back when he slams a heavy elbow into your thigh. You smother a shout and drop the leg immediately, jabbing the gun at your embedded knife to drive it deeper. You hear him roar through the helmet and brace yourself. The hit to your stomach forces all the air out and you're sprawled on your back, trying to remember how do breath or move or just breathe fucking breathe!

You manage to roll to your side just as his foot comes crashing to where your head had been, air still evading your grasp. You blink fast around the spots in your vision and force yourself to your stomach. Finally, you gulp down a breath and shove the ground away just as a knee comes for your side. You're staggering on your feet, hand pressing to your side as you stumble back, barely heaving in air. He's still roaring as he chases you away from the main path, though the carriers are still tilting oddly to you. He catches up by the time the world isn't turning and you duck a punch, managing to slice his under arm, though it's shallow. He kicks again and you manage to jab the barrel of the gun into his thigh. His chain wraps around your ankle just as you jump for a kick off his chest, yanking you back down easily, followed by a punch to the face.

Pain explodes around your nose and you stagger back again. Something hot and wet gushes from your nose, blood probably, so you suck in air through your mouth and ignore the taste of iron building on your tongue. The spots are back, but not so bad you don't dodge another punch. You're behind his arm and shove the knife for his chest with enough force to break

through his ribs only to make it in less than an inch and stop. The guttural roar he unleashes vibrates through your entire being. His elbow hits your temple and you spin, knocked to your knees easily. A hand is gripping your hair, holding your head back with the cold steel of your own blade pressed to your neck. And you're staring into the dark visor of the Nightwatcher.

Through the pain, you think you manage a smirk, though it probably looks more like a grimace, and cock the gun pointed straight up against his chin. Even his helmet couldn't protect against this bullet.

"Drop the gun. Get out of my way." A deep, husky voice resonates from inside that metal case. You almost giggle at it. Who wouldn't? It's fucking hot.

Swallowing against the chilled edge of the blade, you manage to spit back around the blood. "No can do."

"You shoot me, I cut your damn throat. Get out of my way." He growls, pressing that cold steel in enough to nick you, crimson no doubt welling around it, gripping your hair tighter. You vaguely realise that's the only thing keeping you upright.

You huff a laugh. "That's not a threat. This, though," you press the gun harder against his chin, "is a promise."

Maybe it was the cold barrel against his jaw, maybe it was the flagrant disregard for your own life, or maybe it was the spray of bullets that hit his back, it was hard to say what happened first and what he actually reacted to, but somewhere he let go of your hair and you watch from your tilted, slumped position as he slams a smoke bomb down. The grey, choking mist clogs your senses as you blackout.

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The first thing you become aware of is the dull, throbbing pain constant in your face. Then you realize how much your stomach is churning, burning creeping up your throat and you jolt up to the side as vomit forces past your teeth, spilling onto the linoleum floor. You cough with all your body, trying to spit out whatever caught in your throat only to start heaving and another wave of acid makes an appearance. Gathering what's left in your mouth, you spit hard at the stinking pool before shakily pulling yourself back onto what must be a cot. The lights seem blaring to your sensitive eyes, now starting to take in the room at large. It's a clear hospital space, white walls and tiled ceiling with shining fluorescent lights. Counter space along a near wall with cupboards above and below, likely full of medical necessities. There's a curtain to your other side, drawn to protect either yourself or another person. Chairs draped in your clothes and uniform rest along the wall towards your feet. You're familiar with the space—it's a very small emergency room the Foot has maintained control of. You have wound up here about every other month thanks to the intense job. Expenses not covered by insurance are docked directly from your paycheck.

You start moving to sit up, groaning at the aching pain in your stomach, though considering how hard you were hit it doesn't surprise you. Frankly, your thigh feels worse. Drawing back the sheet, you're greeted with almost mesmerizing swaths of purple and blue flesh, bordered by yellow and green bruising. This place doesn't give hospital gowns to injured Foot, leaving

you in your underwear with all the damage on full display. Your thigh is the deepest shade you've seen your skin turn, moderately concentrated to the densest muscle there. Walking is going to be a bitch. Your stomach is more widespread, lighter, but no less painful. Your arm is in a loose brace, probably sprained when he backhanded you. And your face? You can feel the tightness of the brace covering the area around your nose. You're probably lucky you still have a nose to brace, but damn you hate the cast.

Dodging the mess, you swing your legs over the side and drop to the cold floor. You grit your teeth through the spine-tingling shiver from the cold, the pain the next immediate sensation. It's not the worst you've felt, you've fought with broken bones before, but you can't help the limp. Slowly, carefully, you pull on your pants and boots. When you grab your shirt and coat, the instinct to wrinkle your nose causes stabbing pain and you force the brutalised muscles to relax. Still. Your upper body garments are caked in dried blood, which suggests you've only been here for a few hours. You'll have to grab another one of their shit t-shirts, adding a charge to your payment, so you can get home without being arrested for public indecency. Or freeze to death. You add a small cleaning fee to the tab as well after informing the front desk of your mess, though this you suppose is fair. There had been a perfectly decent bucket nearby, albeit not in immediate reach. Bidding adieu to the receptionist, you push open the doors to the bustling street.

It must be mid-morning, but the cloud cover is so thick it's genuinely difficult to tell. You make a b-line for the nearest subway entrance for the route home, ignoring the occasional odd looks. One lady looks up from her phone to dodge you on the sidewalk and actually smothers a shout. You grin at her, lethal and unabashed before continuing on. You sincerely hope that impacted her day. You're starting down the stairs when a guttural roar catches your attention. You look up in time to watch a sleek, crimson bike weave between cars down the street. When you release a breath, you realize how much you had tensed at the sound. And how much you wanted it to be him.

You glare at the cracked flooring as you continue on, mulling over your reaction. He had been one of the most challenging fights you'd engaged head-on, which really isn't your comfort zone. He'd landed you in the hospital, though you have the feeling you'd gotten off the easiest besides the snipers. That was purely a coincidence with the arrival of the real firing squad. He had been prepared to slit your throat wide open, probably wouldn't have bat an eye. You let yourself drift back to that moment as you take your seat on the train.

It was darker between the containers, but you still clearly remember every line of his helmet. You saw every nick, scratch and dent in that thing while you prepared to pull a trigger point-blank. You should have. It's your fucking job to. But you didn't. Maybe you couldn't. Meanwhile the Nightwatcher had already killed multiple people and was ready to do another. He had held that knife so steady, pressed to your skin. Meanwhile you had been shaking with your gun. You're certain he felt it. The barrel pressed directly into his jaw. Your finger hadn't even been on the trigger.

You wonder about the rest of the fight. It happened so fast. Was he still alive? You doubted it, but he's been a difficult little cunt for ages now. With all that armor on, he probably easily made it out of there. You remember the way he'd frozen after the comment you made. If the squad hadn't arrived, would he really have followed through? You try to run through the

memory, frame by frame, and pin point the exact moment he'd drawn back. It's no use. Your head hurts by the time the train is sliding into your station.

The apartment is warm, just the way you like it, and perfectly you. It's fairly minimalistic with scattered small trinkets adorning surfaces, some decorations on the walls, furniture entirely thrifted. You collapse onto the couch heartily, your blood-soaked garments left by the door. No one else's blood got on you, so you're not exactly anxious about it.

The memory of your knife slicing deep into the Nightwatcher's skin hits you hard. Every cut. Every hit you'd landed on him. Sure, he'd already been worn down by the others and had a bullet in his leg, but he didn't fucking act like it. And you had managed to deal the most damage. You wonder, distantly, about how he's patching up. Does he have an emergency room he trusts not to ask questions? Or does he stitch himself up? The vision of a faceless, masculine figure perched on the edge of a bath tub, thick muscular thigh extended, streaked in red, curved needle and thread poised. Does he handle pain well? He must to walk off a bullet. Would he put something in his mouth to bite on as he sews himself up?

You stand up abruptly, shaking your head vigorously to get those sinful thoughts out. What the fuck is wrong with you? You tried to kill him. He tried to kill you! And he's one of the Foot's biggest enemies right now. Not to mention what your family would say about a vigilante. But the visions just start flowing in earnest.

He's sweating bullets, brow furrowed in deep concentration, leather belt clamped between strong teeth and jaw, as he digs out the bullet, muffled grunts and groans of pain echoing in that bathroom. What he looked like under the helmet as he balanced the knife so delicately against your throat, glaring with hatred and determination, the way his husky voice washed over you. The way his face must have changed when you'd made the comment demeaning your life. Maybe his lips had parted, fresh words on his tongue; maybe his face had started to relax into something almost gentle and soothing when gunfire sounded behind him.

Roaring, you kick the side of your couch hard enough to shift it. The pain in your shin burns, aching in the bone with a fresh bruise. How stupid could you be! Romanticizing an incredibly lethal situation, one where you had been less than a second from pulling the trigger and blowing brains all over the inside of his helmet! And he was no fucking different. A thought about your boss has you feeling dunked in ice water—what if she found out? That you are apparently so into the Nightwatcher? Oh she'd kill you, easily. Probably.

Then an image of his hulking form blocking your vision surfaces, arms spread wide, kneeling over your crumpled form, fending off guns and blades and unseen threats. Fuck! You stomp into your bedroom and snatch up a bottle of sleeping meds, downing a little more than the suggested amount and diving into bed. Wrapped in your comforter, you try to fend off the visions with a weakening shield of workplace professionalism, reality and threats of inconceivable violence.

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When you come to, you think it's late evening from the light on your blinds. Stretching your aching body, you roll onto your back and stare at the dark ceiling. Your skin feels a little tight, restlessness curling inside. You won't receive any word from your overseer for a few

days, so you are encouraged to spend this time recuperating. The problem is you think you might break something if you stay home for more than a few hours. Especially after this morning.



## Chapter 2: Drunken sobriety

### Chapter Summary

Why face your problems when alcohol exists? Even if the problem ends up babysitting your drunk ass.

### Chapter Notes

Personal physical violence used, as well as alcohol consumption, being inebriated, fighting drunk, and other possible triggers. If a man fighting a woman in a back alley may be triggering, read at your discretion.

See the end of the chapter for [more notes](#)

The bar stinks of alcohol and people, cloying colognes and perfumes mingle with BO in the tight space. The noise is just as bad. Music plays from the speakers, but it's barely audible over the constant chatter and revelry, occasional noises from the staff piercing the din. But it's perfect for you. The constant fuzzy feeling in your head makes it easy to sway with, the fire in your stomach a soothing friend. It's been a while since you got out like this, with the real intention of getting hammered and forgetting the night. It's better that way. Pleasures of the flesh are easier to enjoy when one doesn't care about their partner.

The problem is, one has to find a partner worth not caring about. And you have found jack fucking all. A ditzy brunette is giggling animatedly beside you when she jerks back, splashing most of her drink over her shoulder and all over one of your more expensive party dresses. You jolt to your feet, stool skittering back before tottering to the floor. Hissing, you pick at the fabric already beginning to cling to your skin with alcohol, the stench almost overwhelming.

"What the fuck?" You snap at the woman. You struggle to hold your tongue sober, drunk is a whole other level.

The girl has a hand over her mouth, eyes wide. "Oh. Em. Gee. I am so sorry girlfriend! I so didn't realize you were right there." Because obviously you hadn't been here first.

"As if you little bitch." You're snarling now, stepping into her space. She's pretty small, so you easily tower over her. Until a rough hand shoves at your shoulder. You tear your glare away from her to lock eyes with a tall, broad, average-looking man.

"What did you just say to her?" He sneers, curling his lip down at you.

The bartender shoves you two apart, or tries to and really ends up sort of squashed awkwardly between your firm stances. “Cool off or take it outside! Now!” He shouts. One of his security men places a meaty hand on your shoulder, another doing the same to the man you're confronting.

Every nerve in your body seems to burn at the touch on your shoulder, but you restrain yourself from breaking it. Instead, you shrug it off and let them corral you out the front door. You hear the guy behind arguing as he's escorted out with more resistance by the sound of it. You stand off to the side and watch with cruel satisfaction as he's shoved onto the sidewalk. The woman doesn't seem to be following, so maybe just a hook up. As soon as the men shut the front doors again, the man whips around to you.

You smirk and shrug, turning and heading for the alley. Maybe he'll follow, maybe he won't. You wouldn't mind smashing his face, despite the struggle to walk in a straight line. He's shouting at you, so you take that as a sign to cheekily look over your shoulder and crook a brow. He looks damn near purple from shouting, arms flailing like he's deranged. You turn the corner, take a few steps, and lean against the wall, willing the world to stop tilting for just a moment so you can whoop his ass.

He barrels around the corner, practically spitting, and doesn't stop until he's right up in your face. He starts talking again, but you're a little distracted by the odd way his temple is pulsing. He gives you a small shove, enough to move you off the wall.

“What're you fuckin lookin at you little bitch!” He spits, squaring his shoulders. It makes him look a little bigger, but he's still small compared to some of the men you've taken down.

You drop into a half-assed defensive stance, staring flatly at him. “I think I'd die of shock if you could be any more pathetic. So you got cock-blocked. Get over it, douchebag.” Your voice is flat and lifeless, but you can't help the cruel smile that curves your lips when you watch his reaction.

He roars. Running at you with a fist raised, he goes for a strong punch. You easily stumble out of the way, dodging the next two wide, sloppy punches he throws. He obviously hasn't had training, you wonder if he's actually ever been in a real fight. His moves are wide, clearly telegraphed, and easily outmaneuvered. Though, you get the feeling that if you were to be hit, it would be bad. Still not as bad as the other night, but you decide you don't like thinking about that.

He goes for a kick that you redirect into a trash can. As his leg goes flying, you elbow his thighs hard and punch towards his liver. He cries out, going for a jab and a left hook. Ducking the jab, you catch the right hook and return with a sharp jab to his throat. It's not enough to do real damage, but he stumbles back coughing hard.

You follow, still not so steady on your feet, wondering how you should knock him out. Probably blunt forced trauma since it would be best he doesn't remember you. As you're surveying the alley for something dense enough to have the right impact, something hard hits the side of your head. You stagger against a dumpster, gasping as the buildings start spinning in earnest. Something hits your stomach, your gut exploding in fresh pain and nausea, burning clawing at your throat. Your arms narrowly save your face from gravel, at least you

assume that's what's digging into your flesh now. Though to be honest, you're not sure if you're even on the ground. You distantly realize you need to move, your muscles trying to roll you over or push you up, when a large, rough hand wraps around your hair and yanks. You're pulled to your knees, that man's silhouette blurring before you.

You think he's talking again, but the hit to your temple started a weird ringing in your ears and you can't really make out his words. You think you understand when he starts raising a balled fist, leveled at your face. When his muscles tense, your eyes clamp shut. It's no fun watching a fist pound your face in. When no impact comes, not even a shift of air, you crack an eye open. His arm is trembling, but doesn't seem to be moving. You spot the glint of a dull metal chain wrapped around his upper arm, close to his elbow, pulled taught and disappearing into the darkness of the deeper alley. The chain looks familiar, but you can't place it through the heady fuzz muddling your thoughts.

The man is yanked back sharply, he stumbles and lets you go. You collapse to your knees, hands bracing just enough to not face-plant. You look up just in time to see him being pulled into the darkness by his arm. It's hard to hear, but a shout followed by dull thuds suggest a fight. A fight the guy isn't winning, if his limp body falling to the concrete is any indicator. It's confusing, this sequence of events, and you shake your head about to clear some of the fog, trying to string two thoughts together—though the movement just makes you dizzy and nauseous so you stop. Instead, you try to push to your feet. If the person that just attacked is interested in another fight, you'd rather meet it standing.

You manage to keep yourself upright on wobbly legs, pressing a hand to the cool wall for extra stability and peer into the alley. "Who's there?" You command, voice rough and slurred even to your ears.

Familiar, heavy, metal footsteps sound as a large figure begins to materialize. His metal armor and helmet glinting in the faint streetlights, he stands over the unconscious man. The unexpected amount of conflicting emotions has you tilting over, the burning in your throat finally making a crescendo as vomit coughs its way out of your system. There's oddly distributed pressure on your shoulder and upper back, cautious to touch but firm with support. When you spit the last of the foul substance from your mouth, you lean into the wall and right yourself, staring up into the darkened visor of the Nightwatcher.

"Fancy meeting you here." You sneer, wiping spit from your chin. Maybe he hadn't recognized you before, maybe he hadn't thought about it, maybe the way you're looking at him tickles his memory, or maybe it's your voice. His hands immediately drop to his sides as he steps away from you.

"You've been better." He comments curtly. "Come here often?" You think he's mocking you, using an obnoxiously common pick up line, but it's hard to concentrate on his tone with the faint ringing still there.

"Only when I wanna cause trouble." You give a lazy smirk, pressing into the cool wall. It's nice on your burning skin. "Never had a knight in shining armor, though." You chuckle at your own joke, though you're not sure how much he's actually shining and how much is the alcohol blurring your vision.

“I can see that.” He looks at the body, glances at you, and then goes to pick the man up. “Bar around the corner?” He asks as he swings the guy over his shoulder. You nod and wave vaguely.

He disappears around the corner. It's hard to hear more, but you recognize the sound of the bar opening and closing. A few moments pass of you trying to decide if you should split or not. Just as you decide to pull out your phone and order a ride, Nightwatcher comes back around carrying a to-go cup with a straw. You realize his entire hand is only two fingers and a thumb. At least, you think so. With his gloves, he could have his pointer and middle in one and ring and pinky in the other, but that's such a weird thing to do. You fixate on his hand, trying to puzzle it out, until he thrusts the cup under your nose.

“It's rude ta stare.” He growls as you take the drink, eyeing it with equal suspicion. You're sticking your nose in the cup, trying to smell it, when he seems to roll his eyes and says “It's just fucking water. Drink it. Maybe you'll be less...” he trails off and you look up to see him vaguely gesturing to all of you.

You snort and down the cup in a few swallows before handing it back to him. He seems dazed when he takes it, chucking it over a shoulder. “Ya got a ride? A friend inside?” He asks, clearly awkward and deeply wishing this interaction would end. You're not sure why he doesn't run off. Does he do this with every person he saves?

“Nah.” You shrug and pull up the app. “Just gonna order a cab.” You're already tapping at the screen to place the order when he groans and puts a broad hand over your phone. You note how his fingers seem to be shaped and decide he doesn't have two fingers bound in the glove. A born disfigurement then? Is that why he's always completely covered up?

“C'mon. I'll get ya home.” You practically drop your phone, jaw hanging open as you stare at him in sheer shock.

“No fuckin way. You almost killed me less than 24 hours ago.” You press into the wall, but tuck your phone back into your pocket.

“And you tried ta kill me. You're drunk, just got in a fight cause I'm assumin he attacked ya.” He's practically growling every word. “It'd be stupid to let you just,” he thrusts a hand towards the main road, “stumble into some randos car.”

You smirk, not trusting him by a long shot but it's weirdly sweet. And awkward. Mostly awkward. You look around exaggeratedly before crooking a brow at him. “And how, oh great knight, are you gonna take me home? Your bike crashed and I know the Foot kept it.”

“I'll show ya. Gotta c'mere though.” He gestures to himself, arms open. He's so stiff it nearly makes you cackle.

“As if. You're gonna hit me or somethin'.”

The long suffering sigh he gives is audible through his helmet and one you are well familiar with from your superiors. It makes you bristle a bit. “I'm not gonna fuckin hit you. I just saved ya, remember?”

You sniff and turn up your nose, crossing your arms over your chest. No matter how much you want to press up against that strong physique, your entire reason for going out for the night was to stop thinking about this man. “That doesn't mean much. I've saved lots of people only to turn around and kill them myself.” You do your best to draw out that killer sleeping under the layers of alcohol and brain damage, but it doesn't have an impact.

“You can come here or I can throw ya over my shoulder and drag your ass the whole way there.” He offers sardonically.

You bite your tongue against the noise curling in your throat at the thought. Not. The fucking. Time. Grinding your teeth, you lift off the wall, stumbling only to be caught in his arms. You hate the way it feels so fucking safe. “The Foot cannot find out about this.” You grumble as he scoops you up to his chest, careful to keep your dress folded against your body, shifting you around until your riding piggyback style, hands gripping your thighs just above your knees. You assume the feeling of being pressed against a shell is due to his insane armor.

“I won't tell em yer slummin it with the enemy if you don't tell anyone the Nightwatcher babysits drunk chicks.” He offers as he starts for the shadows. He steadily picks up speed and as your eyes adjust to the lights you see a towering brick wall he is barreling towards

Reflex puts your head buried in his shoulder, flinching back from the impending impact. Except instead of hitting the wall, you feel him coil and leap, an exhalation of breath as he kicks off a wall and lands on the fire escape of the other building. You peak out in sheer astonishment. You could probably do a maneuver like that, but not nearly so cleanly and certainly not with a passenger. You watch the ground shrink steadily as he takes the ladder-like stairs to the roof.

Without the impending brick wall, you're able to relax against him a bit. It's nice, almost soothing, to be carried with such awareness. And he smells comforting, like leather and iron from his suit, the dark, smooth scent of his deodorant and an underlying masculine musk. You let your heavy head rest against his shoulder, trying to at least feign subtlety about enjoying this. The steady rocking of his sprinting isn't helping the sleepiness beginning to seep into your bones. Your adrenaline must be crashing, you realize blearily and try to open your eyes—just in time to watch him kick off the roof and launch over an alley. Seeing the thirty foot drop has you gripping him hard enough to hurt.

The feeling of him chuckling is addictive. You bite your tongue in an effort to bring yourself away from that train of thought. “Ain't afraid of heights, are ya?” It sounds like he might be shouting, but between his helmet and facing away from you, you're barely able to hear him.

“You fucking wish.” You spit back and force your muscles to relax. Clearly trusting him is not easy nor is it smart. “This is insane, by the way. Do you always travel like this without your bike?”

“Damn right. Streets are too busy. It'd be pretty stupid to attract attention. Ya know, doin what I do.”

“And what do you do? Besides making my job twice as hard?” It's pretty stupid to needle someone who can, and has, kicked your ass, but it's true.

He barks a cruel, harsh laugh as he jumps a particularly wide alley. You ignore the way your stomach claws into your throat at the drop. “I hate to break it to ya, sweetheart but your job ain’t exactly legal and for good reason. Do you know what was in that shipment?” When you don’t answer, he continues. “There was lots of stuff, but I was after a drug. A damn nasty one.” You stay silent, thoughts too muddled in alcohol to process this. “It’s been messin up a lot of innocent people. So when I heard about last night, figured I’d make a mess of them.”

You’re not sure why, but you don’t like the way he’s talking about the Foot. You know it’s a criminal organization, but he’s talking as if he actually knows something—which he doesn’t. There’s no way someone so new to the underworld as the Nightwatcher could actually know anything about your job and the jobs of those you’re hired to protect. Thoughts of your boss start to trickle in, the wreck she was shortly after you were hired on. The way she picked herself up, dug her feet in, and held the organization together by her bare hands.

“You don’t know shit.” You growl, starting to relax your hold and pull away from him. “Let me go. I can get home from here just fucking fine.” He slows and you start squirming in earnest.

It’s not a lie, you’re a block or so away and know no one in the area is dumb enough to fuck with you. He seems reluctant, but releases your legs. You drop to the ground and back away quickly, refusing to turn your back. He’s an enemy, after all.

“You shouldn’t stick your head where it doesn’t belong.” Your voice is unsteady and you realise your eyes are burning from unshed tears. Pathetic.

You watch him straighten, squaring his shoulders. “I know the Foot are dangerous. I know plenty a’ groups just like ‘em that fuck people over again and again and don’t give a damn what happens to those people.” His voice is infuriatingly calm, though you detect a faint tremor. His fists must be shaking from restraint, then.

“You’re so fucking niave.” You accuse with every ounce of building fury. “People get hurt no matter who causes it. Whether it’s gangs or those big ass shiny companies. The difference is the Foot looks out for each other! They care about their members and keeps everyone safe.” Even as the words leave your lips, a tiny voice calls to question. Is that true? Or just what you’ve been told most of your life? You shove down the descent, focusing on the Nightwatcher. “I had nothing before they took me in. My family disowned me, left me to rot in the gutter.” The tears are flowing now, your hands making fast, broad gestures.

You watch, breathing hard, as he seems to almost deflate, and it enrages you. You can’t see beyond the visor, but you’re certain he’s creasing his brows in confusion, maybe even puckering his lips as he tries to decipher what you meant. Or he already figured it out and feels sorry for you. The thought burns your blood, sets your teeth on edge, makes the edges of your vision stain red. No one pities you. He’s starting to say something, but you whip out your oldest friend, a rope dart, you’d tucked into a deep pocket.

The clean, sturdy rope is light and fast, the weighted dagger at the end a lethal addition. He barely has time to react as it flies for his face. When he drops to a crouch, you yank the rope just so and have the weight hit his helmet as it returns to your hand. Your stance is much firmer, more grounded, than that in the alley, the near silken rope smooth in your hands as

you twirl the dart end fluidly. The Nightwatcher stands, hand pressed to the back of his helmet as he corrects it.

“I’m sorry, sweetheart, I didn’t know.” His voice is gruff, but there’s no anger, no aggression or resentment. Maybe frustration at worst, but the only thing you truly hear is more pity.

You spin, throwing the dart again. This time it flies wide before arching back, around his body, and the dagger slices into an exposed stretch of flesh on his upper arm. You begin a series of complicated steps that twist and spin and twirl, guiding the rope to flow with you, striking him against and again. Even when the blade hits the armor, you know well enough the damage the weight and velocity can do through protection. He makes no move to close the distance, to disarm you, he barely makes an effort to dodge and block. Every passive motion, every conservative step, becomes another log on the fire roiling within your chest, burning your ribs with every breath. The red seeps into your vision the more you watch him, the more you try so damn hard to bring him to his knees, to prove you need no one’s pity, until the only thing not painted in blood is him. Him. Him. He pities you.

The cry that rips its way from your burning chest, up your throat and beyond your lips belongs to a wounded animal as you perform an intense maneuver that aims straight for his head. You watch with chilling satisfaction and pride as the point of the blade hits square on the Nightwatcher’s visor. As you rip the dart back to your hand, the world seems to slow to his visor. You watch, fixated, as the tiny dent your blade did to the thick, tinted glass begins to spread, a spiderweb creeping across until it encompasses the entire stretch of glass. You blink and the glass shatters, exploding out, so fortunately out, because as you watch the shards dance through the air, you lock eyes with such beautiful, deep, rich brown eyes framed in vibrant red.

You freeze, staring, unable to look away, and you watch so many different emotions flicker through those eyes. The first you register is not pity, but empathy. This is quickly overtaken by fear, which is consumed by fury. You watch the fire roar to life and wonder if you should have called the ride after all. The fight seems to have completely left your body, though you’re not sure why. You don’t raise your arms to fend off his attack as he starts towards you, you don’t even attempt to coil your rope for short-range combat. You can do little more than stare at those fucking eyes and hope he doesn’t force you to stop. You keep staring as he raises his fist and slams it into your chest, square in the middle, sending you reeling and gasping for air like a dead fish.

“You’re a real bitch, ya know that?” He spits, stomping past as you curl onto your side, clutching your burning chest, trying and failing to remember how to inhale. “This is the last fucking thing I wanted to spend my night doin.” You hear him messing with something a few yards away.

When you finally manage a ragged, broken inhale, filling your aching lungs with oxygen, you cough. “Then why are you still here? Just go away you fucking bastard.” You rasp around the coughing and wheezing, you’re not actually certain your speech was intelligible.

Something creaks in response and you wonder if he’s gone when a frigid blast of water hits you in the side. Your body is washed in ice, muscles tensing and locking, lungs straining even harder, thoughts stopped in their tracks. As quickly as the water had come it stops, leaving

you shivering and shocked still on the concrete roof. Something clinks to the ground and his metal footsteps sound as he walks back over. You watch from the corner of your eye as he crouches, watching you closely.

“Are ya done now?” You want to spit. You want to hit him so hard, that stupid helmet goes flying. But you can barely make your fingers twitch, let alone manage a complex motion like form a fist. So instead, you try to let your muscles relax and blink slowly. He grunts and carefully scoops you from the floor, this time bridal style. “Where are we goin, sweetheart?” He asks and you don't fail to notice how gentle he sounds now. You want to see his expression, but your head is too heavy to lift in a way you can see those rich brown eyes again.

It makes the backs of your eyes burn, but you stare in the direction of your building and jerk your chin. He steadily picks up a steady pace, a light jog, until he's halfway to the edge of a building where he starts sprinting to make the jump. Even with his weight oddly distributed, his arms still occupied and with no hope of use now, he's still disgustingly graceful. You can't help the twinge of bitter jealousy, considering you're certain you've spent longer training than he has—very few people have spent more of their lives training than you.

It takes barely five minutes to get there, the time passing in chilled silence, chilled because at some point you started shivering from the water. The moment he noticed he stopped slowing down, instead tilting into a full sprint. You didn't say anything, not that you really could around your slightly chattering teeth. He slows on a neighboring rooftop from your own, confusing you until you notice he's pacing the length of the building.

“Which unit?” His gruff voice is slightly winded, which makes you feel a tiny bit better. When you shake your head, he only huffs in annoyance. “I can at least help ya into your window. In this state, ya'd fall down the stairs.” He almost grumbles the last part, and when you try to shift your leg out of his hold, you realise how right he is. You're so cold, have been for so long, that your muscles are barely responding and certainly couldn't hold you upright descending those steep steps.

You direct him to the right corner of the building, thankfully your unit is on the corner and thus there's access to the living room. Landing on your roof, he sets you on the ground—away from the ledge—and disappears over the flat side of the building. You resist the lurch of your heart into your throat, staring at the gravel on the roof and straining to listen for hints of what he's doing. With absolutely no clues, you get increasingly antsy until he returns, picks you up and throws you over his shoulder. You're about to start squawking in protest when he begins scaling the sheer brick wall down to your window. By the time he's helping you inside the window, which he assumedly broke into and opened earlier, you're forcing your stomach back into its place and resisting the urge to vomit again.

You're about to stagger for the bathroom when he reaches in and grasps your wrist. “Hey.” When you look back, there's a look in those incredible eyes you know you won't be able to stop thinking about. “The Foot aren't the only people that would help ya. If you ever want to get outta there, come find me.” He doesn't break eye contact and you're certain it's intentional, refusing to let you think it's some trick, something fake. It's a genuine offer. He



would help you break out of one of the largest, most renowned criminal organizations in the world. And then he lets go of you and is gone.

## Chapter End Notes

By the way, he could totally smell the alcohol spilled on her dress but didn't mind too much cause they grew up in the sewer.

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